





A
SISTER'S LOVE.

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WALKERS'

ORIGINAL SERIES OF

HUMOROUS DIALOGUES.

No. 114.

“A SISTER’S LOVE”:

A Humorous Dialogue, in Two Parts, for Five Persons

CHARACTERS:

MARY CRAWFORD.....	} Two Orphans, recently bereaved.
ROBERT CRAWFORD, her Brother.....	
* BRIDGET.....	} Their old Irish Servant.
JOHN RENSHAW.....	
JAMES BROOKES.....	} Friends of Robert Crawford’s.

Scene (in both Parts).—Parlour in the Crawford’s house. A table and a few chairs to be nicely arranged. Give the platform, as nearly as possible, the appearance of a neat room.

PART I.--“LOVE’S TRIAL.”

[Enter Mary. She sits down and sews, knits, or crochets. She appears to be in a thoughtful and serious mood.]

Mary [*sighs*]. Oh, how lonely I do feel at nights; how different from the old days. To think that this time last year, we were a happy, loving family, till sickness, and then death, broke up our little circle, and my brother and I having lost both parents, were thrown into the vortex of a busy world. Still, I ought not to repine. Our dear father had left us enough to set up this nice little house, and some kind friends soon procured Robert a good situation, so, at least we are comfortable. But, oh, at times, the old sore *will* open, and my heart feels as though it would overflow. [*Makes a short pause.*] I hear Bridget’s footstep; *she* is one of the most valuable treasures left us. At least, *I* think so, I know that she loves us with all the warmth of her large heart. I expect she is coming to comfort me.

[Enter Bridget.]

Bridget. Sure, Miss, I’m beggin’ yer pardin for troublin’ ye. But I thought maybe ye’d be lonely.

* This character should (if practicable) be played by an adult.

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* This character should (if practicable) be played by an adult.

Mary. So you thought you would come and have a chat with me, eh? Well, to tell you the truth, I *was* beginning to fret a bit. You know that when one thinks over past events especially in such a case as mine), one cannot help feeling sad.

Bridget. Sure, Miss, that's just the very thing we must *not* do. Didn't your dear father often say, "Keep your heart up, and trust in Providence," and remember, Miss Mary, acushla, that both your darlin' parents are bether off now, and that they have left *ye* very comfortable.

Mary [*smiling*]. Yes, and that they have left me a good kind-hearted creature, to console me at all times.

Bridget. Ah, Miss Mary, alanna, but it's mighty kind of you to say that same. They didn't put me in that big piece of *Parshment* (as I think the lawyers call it), but yer beautiful mother says, "Bridget" says she, "ye'll see to Miss Mary and Mr. Robert, won't ye?" "Yes, Ma'am," says I, "I'll stick to them through thick and thin, come what may," and so I will.

Mary. I quite believe you Bridget. But there, I feel better now, I will not keep you from your work. I expect Robert in directly.

Bridget. Oh, all right, Miss Mary, dear. And it's glad I am to see those bright eyes, dry again. Sure, I'll go now. [*Exit.*]

Mary. It was well she *has* gone, for somehow, I cannot make Robert understand that she is doing her best in her own humble way to lighten my burden. I love my brother with all my heart, but I would wish that our thoughts were more in keeping with each other's. [*A knock.*] Ah! there he is, I believe.

[*Enter Robert.*]

Robert. Good evening, Mary. How are you? Quite well, eh? But you look as though you had been crying; I know what it is. Just as I came in, I saw that old Bridget coming out of this room. I suppose she has been "comforting" you, which generally means, trying how many tears she can draw out of your eyes.

Mary. Oh, Robert, dear, don't be so cruel. No; Bridget has *not* been trying how many tears she can draw from my eyes, but on the contrary, the dear creature (knowing that when I am by myself, I get fretting) came to see if she could console me, and really succeeded, for her words of comfort had a most soothing effect upon me.

Robert. It would be all the better if the "dear creature" were to mind her own business. A servant should keep in the

kitchen, and not interfere with the private concerns of her mistress.

Mary. But, Robert, you must remember that Bridget is not a servant of the usual kind. Think how she has nursed us both, and has been with us all our lives, both in weal and in woe.

Robert. Well, Mary, don't let us argue any further on *that* point. Bridget is a privileged servant, and she knows it. But perhaps you will leave this "dear creature" for a moment, and interest yourself in your own brother.

Mary. Oh, Robert, for shame. Do I not *always* take a deep and loving interest in the welfare of my dear brother.

Robert. Well, yes; I must admit I *was* rather hasty that time. But I know you will forgive me. I was going to tell you, that I have asked two fellows out of our office, to come along here to-night.

Mary. Who are they?

Robert. One is John Renshaw, our ledger clerk, and the other is James Brookes, the assistant cashier. They are two decent sort of fellows, Renshaw is a quiet, rather goody-goody sort of a chap, but Brookes is far more lively, rather fond of punning, I like him by far the better of the two. But hush! [*a knock*] here they come, now you can judge for yourself.

[*Enter Renshaw and Brookes, Renshaw is quiet and sedate looking, Brookes is fashionably dressed, and well "got up."* Robert introduces them to Mary.]

Robert. Well, now, gentlemen, make yourselves at home, we have only a small "crib" as you see, but you are welcome all the same.

Brookes. Well, come now, I am sure that your "crib," as you call it, is very comfortable, and [*gallantly*] in such order and tidyness as to do great credit to the good fairy who presides over it.

Mary. I am afraid Mr. Brookes that you are a sad flatterer.

Renshaw. Oh, never mind him, Miss Crawford, he doesn't mean it. He is only waiting for you to say something that he can make a pun of.

Brookes. A pun; my word, Renshaw, I shall pun-ish you if you talk like that. [*Robert and Renshaw will groan whenever Brookes puns.*]

Robert. Now don't you two fellows begin quarrelling. What would you like to do to amuse yourselves? We have got dominoes, draughts, or chess, or there are a few books here,

which you can look at. My sister has rather a squeamish objection to cards, so like a good boy, I have never yet brought a pack home.

Brookes. You mentioned *draughts*. I could do with a good draught of "home-brewed."

Renshaw. Brookes, for shame! Remember that you are not in the office now, but in the company of a lady.

Robert. My sister, I should have told you before, is a teetotaler, so I cannot ask you "to taste the cheering cup."

Renshaw [*to Mary.*] I am glad to find, Miss Crawford, that you, like myself, are a total abstainer.

Mary. Do you not find it very hard, Mr. Renshaw, to resist the great temptation in your business?

Renshaw. Oh, yes; it is so much the fashion now-a-days, for young fellows to be continually "standing drinks," that it really becomes quite a persecution to such as myself.

Robert. Now we don't want a temperance lecture or dialogue, so let's change the subject.

Brookes. Or in other words, let us subject ourselves to a change.

Mary. Well, Robert, and how are your friends going to spend the evening? By the way, you will excuse my not asking you before, I presume you have had tea?

Brookes. Oh, yes, thank you. Do not tea-ze yourself on that subject.

Mary. Now, Mr. Renshaw, I challenge you to a game of draughts.

Renshaw. And I accept that challenge with the greatest of pleasure.

[*Mary will then "set out" a draught board and "men," and they two will commence playing, stopping when they have to speak.*]

Robert. Oh, that's very cool of you two, to sequester yourselves away in that manner. But never mind. Here Brookes, old man, come and have a game of dominoes with me. [*They will then commence a game.*]

Brookes [*aside to Robert*]. There seems to be quite a bond of sympathy between your sister and Renshaw, at least as far as teetotalism is concerned.

Robert. Oh, yes, but quiet fellows like him, generally are ladies' men.

Mary [*to Renshaw*]. And how long have you been a teetotaler?

Renshaw. I joined a Band of Hope at the Sunday school I went to, when I was quite a little boy. My father and mother were very pleased at my having done so, and gave me every encouragement. I have lost both my parents, and before my dear mother breathed her last, she made me promise her that I would in my business career, still continue true to those principles which had been instilled into my young mind.

Mary. Then you, like myself, are an orphan. You must find it hard work to keep clear of the many pitfalls which are now laid to catch and trip up young people.

Renshaw. You are right, there. But I happily chanced to light upon some old friends of my father's, and with them I am at present lodging, or perhaps I should rather say *residing*, for I am treated as one of the family, in every respect.

Mary. And are they nice people?

Renshaw. Oh, very. They are best of all, good Christians, and do all they can to keep me in the right way. But we are neglecting the game, I think it's your "move" next. [*They then resume their game.*]

Brookes [*to Robert*]. I say, Bob, they are getting quite "thick" there.

Robert. Ah, well; leave them alone for a bit. But, Brookes, old man, this is rather "slow," isn't it? Let's ship out quietly, as far as the "Club," we can come back again very soon, for it's no distance off hardly.

Brookes. All right. But isn't it rather rude to leave the company in that way?

Robert. Oh, the company are all right. Perhaps if the truth were known, they would prefer to be left alone for a while.

Robert [*aloud*]. Mary, my dear, we are just going out for a few moments; we will be back directly. [*Exit Robert and Brookes.*]

[*Mary and Renshaw will continue their game for a short time, and Mary makes remarks occasionally, suitable to the game, such as "I take you for not taking me," "another king for me," and such like.*]

Mary. I wonder where my brother and Mr. Brookes have gone?

Renshaw. Oh, I expect they are going to pay a "flying visit" to the "Club."

Mary. What Club?

Renshaw. Do you not know that they have lately started one in this district?

Mary. But do you mean a cricket club or football club, or what kind is it?

Renshaw. Nothing so innocent as any of those. It is called a "Social Club," and the members who are considered the most "social," are those who pay for the most "drinks," and are the noisiest at "closing-time."

Mary [*in a tone of alarm*]. And does Robert frequent such a place?

Renshaw. Well, I suppose that I will be considered a tell-tale for "blabbing" to you, but as you have asked me so pointedly, I cannot refrain from telling you the plain unvarnished truth. Your brother and Brookes *do* belong to the "Club," and I have frequently been unmercifully "chaffed," because I would not join.

Mary. Oh! I am grieved to hear this. I see now why Robert has so often come in late, and why, when I question him, he equivocates, and tells me he has been on business.

Renshaw. I feel almost sorry now that I told you about it.

Mary. Nay, Mr. Renshaw, you did quite right in letting me know, and I'm greatly obliged to you. But what is to be done? May I rely upon your assistance in endeavouring to convince my brother of his error before he goes too far into this evil? For, indeed, I *do* love him dearly, and I promised our poor dear mother, on her deathbed, that I would always watch over him, and be his guardian angel. That promise I consider as a vow, too sacred to be broken.

Renshaw [*aside*]. What a dear good girl. I wish I had such a mentor. [*Aloud.*] Miss Crawford, you may rely upon my rendering you every assistance in my power, for my sympathy is entirely with you, while at the same time, I esteem your brother, for he is a good-hearted fellow, his greatest fault seems to be that he is rather hasty and too easily led away.

Mary. You are right. He *is* really good-hearted, as you say, and I know at bottom he loves me. I do not care, though, for the style of Mr. Brookes. He seems inclined to be "fast."

Renshaw. Yes, he *is* rather disposed that way, but still he and I keep tolerably good friends on the whole, though we have at times rather a warm argument on the "manliness" of drinking, smoking, and other kindred accomplishments of the present day.

Mary. I thought I heard a noise then. [*A noise is heard outside, then the voices of Robert and Brookes singing "For he's a*

jolly good fellow,' after which, they enter, with their hats thrown back and a wild look in their eyes, and other evidences of their being slightly, but not too much so, under the influence of drink.]

Mary. Robert? Whatever is the meaning of this? Where have you been? and what have you been doing?

Robert. Oh, I've been on business my dear sister.

Mary. But what kind of business, Robert? Oh, fie upon you that you should so far forget yourself.

Robert. Here, now, don't come any of your teetotal twaddle here.

Mary. At least you might behave like a gentleman should do, and not come into the room with your hat on. I am surprised at you.

Robert. Oh, don't be so particular. But there [*takes his hat off and throws it off the platform*], that shan't vex you any more. Anything else I can do for you?

Mary [*in a dignified tone*]. Robert, you are in such a state that to talk to you is mere waste of time.

Brookes. He is in a "united" state.

Mary. You may joke about it, sir, if you like, but *I* consider him to be in a *state* which the meanest creature on earth would scorn to place itself in.

Robert. Will you hold your silly tongue. What do *you* know about such things. Don't annoy me any more with such stuff.

Mary. Very well, Robert, I will *not* annoy you again this evening. I wish you good night, Mr. Renshaw, and as for *you*, sir [*to Brookes*], when you are in a fit condition to speak to a lady, I will perhaps change my present opinion of you. [*Exit.*]

Brookes. Oh, I say, Bob, that *is* hard on a fellow. We have offended her ladyship.

Renshaw. Ought you not rather to say, that by your ungentlemanly conduct, you have placed yourself in a very bad light in her eyes.

Brookes. Oh, you shut up, old milksop! Daren't touch a glass of wine, poor child! Bah! I despise such babywork.

Renshaw [*with a frown on his face*]. Brookes, were you in your sober senses, you know that you dare not use such terms with impunity. But now I feel more pity for, than anger with you.

Robert. I hope that Mary does not guess where we really have been. I wouldn't for the world that she should know about my belonging to the "Club."

Renshaw. But your sister *does* know all about it.

Robert. What! who told her?

Renshaw. I did, and I may say that she is greatly grieved about it. So much so, that I, at first, regretted having told her, but she thanked me for the information, and I *know* that I did what was only right in letting her know about it. I thought at first that she was aware of your being in the "Club," as I had never understood it to be a secret, so when you had gone out, and she asked where you were, I told her I thought you had gone to the "Club."

[*During this sentence, Robert and Brookes will jump up and assume a pugnacious attitude.*]

Robert. So, you mean, contemptible fellow, while my back was turned you have been "clatting" about me, have you?

Brookes. What do you mean by being so *mean*?

Renshaw. Nay, it is not *I* who am mean. I should have been mean though, if, instead of answering in a straightforward manner, I had helped you out in doing that to which I am so greatly opposed.

Brookes. Yes, that's just it. He hasn't the pluck to enjoy himself, and so he must have a "rap" at those who do.

Renshaw. Oh, yes. I *do* like enjoyment of a right kind, as much as anybody, but I like at the same time, to have the use of my *senses*, which I know will enhance the pleasure.

Robert. Here, who's talking about *senses*? Do you mean to say or hint, that *I* am devoid of sense, eh?

Renshaw [*warmly*]. I *do* mean to say most emphatically, that you have both abused and muddled those senses, which you ought to value more highly.

Robert. Oh, this is going too far. Here you miserable cant, what do you mean. [*Advances to him in a threatening manner.*]

Renshaw. Well, I am not afraid of you, so beware! I can at least defend myself.

Brookes. And perhaps, as you have also insulted me, you won't mind defending yourself from *my* punishment as well.

[*Robert and Brookes then rush on to Renshaw, and a scuffle ensues, during which, Mary and Bridget rush in. Mary takes hold of Robert, and Bridget (who has a sweeping brush in her hand) wards Brookes off Renshaw, whenever he attempts to rush at him.*]

Mary. This is nice work, isn't it? What does it all mean?

Robert. Oh, you go to bed, and leave us alone.

Mary. No, Robert, I will *not*. I am the eldest and the mistress of this house, and I demand an explanation of this outrageous conduct.

Robert. Well, if you *must* know, it all comes of that sneak there, [*pointing to Renshaw*] telling tales of us, behind our backs. He told you about my being in the "Club," didn't he?

Mary. Yes, he did, and it made me very sad to hear about it. For oh, Robert, [*cries*] to think that after all our dear father and mother said to us, you should so soon go astray.

Robert. Oh, don't come blubbering here. The cat is let out of the bag now, and I intend to punish the fellow who untied the string, as it were.

[*He rushes at Renshaw, but Mary holds him back; Brookes also tries to do so, but is kept back by Bridget, with the brush.*]

Renshaw. It is only the presence of a lady, that prevents me from paying you back, in your own coin. As it is, though, I think I had better go.

Mary. Yes, do, Mr. Renshaw, please.

Renshaw. Good night, then. I am truly sorry on your account, Miss Crawford, that this has occurred. Perhaps your brother will some day be sorry for the misery he is causing you. [*Exit.*]

Mary. Now, Mr. Brookes, you must promise me that you will not molest him on the way, otherwise, I shall be under the unpleasant necessity of sending for a policeman, to escort you.

Brookes. Oh no, don't do that. I promise you that I won't touch him *now*, but he may look out to-morrow.

Mary. I hope that when to-morrow comes, you will be able to see how foolish you have made yourself appear.

Bridget. Ah, sure now, Mr. Robert, dear, let me make ye a nice *sedlich* powther, and get to bed, and then ye'll be better in the mornin'.

Robert. I think I will, too, Bridget, for I have got an awful headache. So I'll say good night, Brookes. I suppose I'll see you to-morrow.

Brookes. All right, old boy, good night.

Robert. Well, I'll come and see you out.

[*Exit both.*]

Mary. Oh, Bridget, how sorry I am to see Robert do this.

Bridget. Sure, Miss, dear, don't be so put out about it. It's the first time, and plase God, it'll be the last, for they'll have such a heavy head, the both of them, in the mornin', as will make them feel sorry they ever tasted the nasty stuff, so "keep your heart up and trust in Providencee," as your dear father used to say.

Mary. Well, I hope and pray, that what you say, will really be the ease, but oh, [*cries*] it is so hurting for him to say such unkind things to me, and knowing how fond I am of him!

[*Bridget goes up to her, and puts her arm tenderly round her, in an affectionate manner.*]

Bridget. Sure, Miss, it's beautiful to see how ye love him. And I know he loves you too. He doesn't mean it, for he hardly knows what he says now, and he will be sorry for it in the morning, so come along, darlin', come to bed, and may yer angel mother watch over ye both.

[*Exit both; Mary leaning on Bridget's shoulder, and weeping.*]

PART II.--"LOVE'S REWARD."

[*Six months are supposed to have elapsed. Enter Mary, she sits down. She is evidently in great distress of mind. She sews, knits, or crochets.*]

Mary. Alas! Bridget was wrong when she said that after the first night's dissipation, the sensations next morning, would drive away all thoughts of Robert's again being guilty of such an offense. No, there seems to be a fascinating influence which is fast gaining the mastery over him. Brookes and he now spend nearly every evening at that odious "Club." I wish Robert would not associate so closely with that young man, for I do not like his style at all. Renshaw is more to my mind. In fact, I feel that there is a deep regard growing within me towards him. But it cannot be; I must not encourage such thoughts, for, did I not promise our dear mother, that I would not think of leaving Robert, so long as there appeared to be any danger of his falling into temptation.

[*Enter Bridget.*]

Bridget. Sure, Miss, here's Mither Renshaw just come at last, he's just outside the door. He axed me to beg of you to let him have a few minutes *conversion*, I think he called it, wid ye.

Mary. Oh, well, tell him to come in. [*Exit Bridget.*] Can it be that he is coming to see me on the most important of all subjects? Ah, here he is.

[*Enter Renshaw.*]

Renshaw. Good evening, Miss Crawford.

Mary. Good evening, Mr. Renshaw.

[*They shake hands.*]

Renshaw. Miss Crawford I have taken the liberty of calling to see you personally.

Mary. Well, Mr. Renshaw, I am very pleased to see you. Can I be of any service to you?

Renshaw. Miss Crawford, I never was good at making long or flowery speeches, so you must excuse me, if I speak in a very straightforward manner. The fact is, I love you. Now, I have come this evening, to ask you if you will accept my attentions. I want to be sure upon that point. I may tell you, that though your brother and Brookes apologized to me after that unhappy evening, six months ago, they have never been the same with me since; and though your brother often assures me that I am welcome here yet there has grown a coolness between us, which I regret to say, I see no prospect of being erased. You will wonder then, why I have continued to come here, in spite of all this. Well, the answer is, because I feel a deep interest, nay more, *affection* for you, Miss Crawford. Oh, tell me that I have not loved in vain, and that you, to some extent at least, reciprocate my feelings, or I will absent myself from this house from henceforth, never again to darken its doors, for the attraction would be gone, were you to feel coolly or indifferently towards me.

Mary. Mr. Renshaw, since you have spoken so openly and plainly to me, I will be equally candid. I must confess that I am *not* indifferent to you.

Renshaw. Oh, is that so? Miss Crawford, nay, I will take the liberty of calling you Mary. How glad I am.

Mary. But stay, Mr. Renshaw, we must not say anything more upon this subject at present.

Renshaw. Why not, Mary?

Mary. Because my love and regard must *first* be bestowed on my brother, the more especially as he is now so exposed to temptation, but you and I may still be dear friends.

Renshaw. Dear friends! Oh no, let the tie be closer. I am in a good position. My employers have recently expressed themselves highly satisfied with me, and have increased my salary, and in short, I feel quite justified in asking you to share with me all I have.

Mary. Oh, do not press me so hard. I feel that my duty is to remain here at present, at least, until I see some promise of amendment in my brother.

Renshaw. Well, then I will leave the matter in your hands. But stay, I will go and see your brother. Will you promise me that if he should come to a distinct arrangement to reform, you will then accept my suit?

Mary. Yes, John, I *will* give you that promise. [*Gives him her hand.*]

Renshaw. Well, then I will go. Good evening till I come back again.

Mary. Good evening, John. [*Exit Renshaw.*] I have been expecting this. I think I have done what is right. Perhaps Robert *will* mend soon, and then I may look forward to a course of happiness, but for a while at least, I must shut out this fair dream.

[*Enter Bridget.*]

Bridget. Sure, Miss Mary, it's like the Queen ye are. Here's another gintleman wants to have a orjince wid ye.

Mary. And who is it this time?

Bridget. Sure, it's Mither Brookes. Ye'll excuse me, Miss Mary, dear, but I don't like that young man. I don't think as he's come straight here. At laste he don't shmell as if he had.

Mary. Will you ask him to come up. [*Exit Bridget.*]

[*Enter Brookes, "got up" in fine style.*]

Brookes. Good evening, Miss Crawford.

Mary. Good evening, Mr. Brookes. Is my brother with you?

Brookes. No, he's not, but he'll be here very soon. [*Aside.*] Now for it. I must secure this girl, for I believe that noodle of a Renshaw is after her. [*Aloud.*] May I have the felicity of a few moments private and confidential talk with you, Miss Crawford.

Mary. Really, Mr. Brookes, I cannot understand why I am honoured with this visit.

Brookes. Do *you* call it honoured. Oh, that I could have the honour, the pleasure, the happiness, the joy, the bliss, the transcendant delight of paying you many such visits. [*Aside.*] Good language that.

Mary. You say *such* visits. Pray, may I enquire in what capacity you come here, this evening? Have you anything to say about my brother?

Brookes. Your brother! Well he is a decent fellow. But it is not of or to him I would now speak. Oh, Miss Crawford, [*falls on his knees*] I am here to lay my poor wounded, love-sick,

heart, at your angelic feet, to plead my cause to you. Oh deign to listen to me. [*Aside.*] Keep it up Jim!

Mary. Mr. Brookes, this is entirely unlooked for. You must surely know that I have no sympathy with or for you. You hold what I consider to be very erroneous principles, which you have instilled into my brother. Can I then have any respect for you? No, I must beg of you therefore, to desist from annoying me in this manner.

Brookes. Annoying you! Nay, do not adopt such a haughty tone. You *must* listen to me. I am determined on it. [*Goes up to her and takes hold of her arm.*] I love you, and I know that if you try, you can return my affection.

Mary. Leave go of my arm, sir.

Brookes. Nay, I will not, until you promise me, that you will at least give me a patient hearing.

[*Mary then struggles to free herself from his grasp. He, however, keeps tightly hold of her. She screams, and Bridget rushes in with a sweeping brush, with which she menaces Brookes. On seeing her, Brookes leaves go of Mary, who will sink into a chair, covering her face with her hands.*]

Bridget. How dare ye come here to annoy Miss Mary like that, ye villain! Sure, I've a good mind to knock yer ugly head off.

[*Enter Robert and Renshaw, who look astonished. Renshaw goes to Mary.*]

Robert. Ah! What's all this about?

Bridget. Sure, it's mighty glad I am to see ye this minnit, Misther Robert. That blackguard there, came here to see Miss Mary. After a while, I hears a scream, and when I comes in, what do I see but him howlding her beautiful arm in his dirty paw. But I soon made him lave go.

Robert. Oh, you scoundrel. This then is the reason you told me to go before you and wait at the "Club," and that you would follow me immediately. That, I see, was to give you the opportunity of coming here to insult my sister. Get out of this house at once, or you will bitterly rue having come into it.

Brookes. Oh, indeed. So we've changed our tune and gone very good, have we? How kind and considerate of *you* not to allow your sister to be annoyed. Well, I suppose I must transfer my affections to where they can be better appreciated.

Bridget. Now get along wid ye, and no more impudence, or sure I'll swape ye out like dirt wid me brush. [*She threatens him with the brush, and he rushes out pursued by her.*]

Robert. Mary, my dear, you may wonder at this sudden change in my conduct. Well, the truth is, that for some time past, I have been getting more and more disgusted with the associations into which I was being led. Their ideas of "fun" were so base and obscene, that I could hardly endure to listen to them. The ringleader of all that sort of work was Brookes.

Mary. Yes, so I should think.

Robert. Well, to continue; to-night, Brookes said to me, "Robert, you might go and wait for me at the "Club," I will join you presently." I went, and there happened to be some of the lowest and coarsest of all the members there. Their talk increased the loathings I had already begun to feel. While I was waiting, who should come in but Renshaw. He told me about his having been here, and of *your* noble self-denial. The contrast between your great and unselfish love to me, and the way in which *I* have been conducting myself lately, made me thoroughly ashamed of myself. I may also tell you that the temperance sermon our minister preached last Sunday, made a great impression on me, and further, my employer called me into his private office this morning, and cautioned me about my "loose" ways, which means, that if I do not mend, I shall lose my place. I believe he also cautioned Brookes.

Renshaw. I will finish the story if you please. After some little hesitation I persuaded your brother, and he came with me to the minister's house, and signed the pledge. He also quite agrees with my offering myself to you, and wishes us every joy.

Mary. Oh, is this true? Then my prayers have been answered. But John, dear, I hardly think it will do to leave Robert, yet, [*playfully*] you know he is only young.

Renshaw. But why should you leave him? I have been thinking the matter over. Why not have him to come and live with us?

Robert. Oh, that would be grand.

Mary. Yes, so it would. Now, Robert, there is one humble individual to whom, I think, you owe an apology.

Robert. Oh, I know who you mean. Well, let it be done. Call her here.

[*Mary rings a bell. Enter Bridget.*]

Robert. Bridget, you have been a true friend to my sister and myself, since the death of our dear parents. I have not appreciated you, but I know that I have many times behaved very rudely to you. I have made up my mind to turn over a new leaf. May I ask you to forgive me?

Bridget. Forgive ye, Misther Robert? Ah, sure now, what would a poor woman like me have to forgive ye for? Don't I love ye too much to say anything about it? Oh, Miss Mary, darlin', didn't I tell ye as yer poor dear father used to say, "Keep yer heart up and trust in Providence," an' here's Misther Robert, just as I towld ye, was only makin' a mistake, which he has now found out.

Renshaw. Yes, you are right. It was a mistake into which too many young men of the present day fall. They give themselves up entirely to amusement, and are not too particular in their choice of entertainment.

Mary. Well, it is getting late. You must be going now, John, dear, I feel quite happy now, for my love to my brother is at last rewarded, and I have gained another love, which I will always try to prove myself worthy of.

Robert. But before we separate, let me say that I once more apologize to you all for my late bad conduct. I will do all I can to promote your happiness, John, who I hope will soon be a relation of mine. And in seeing the error of the way in which I was going, and in my efforts to keep in the right path, I will first ask Divine help, and for a continuation of

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